

The Illustrious Client

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Summary: Sherlock hates dry spells. However, during this one there is finally a break in his suffering when a client arrives in the middle of the night. The client: Molly Hooper. The same Molly who he hasn't spoken to in months.

1. Chapter 1

****THE ILLUSTRIOUS CLIENT****

_Hello lovelies. I'm bringing you another mini-fic. As it happens I really loves those and I have a lot of ideas for them. This one has been sitting in my head for a while now and I'm so happy to finally bring it to you. It's probably my first in depth case fic without veering too much. It also is angst heavy â€" my M.O. â€" so I hope you like feels. _

For a point of reference this is set after the Moriarty message â€" and after they deal with that â€" of course I have no idea what that'll entail yet until s4 airs but this is how it works for this fic. It'll make a lot more sense once you get into it so without any more rambling on my part ENJOY!

much love,

_day _

P.S. I would like to thank the ever wonderful ****mizjoely**** for looking this over for me and answering my questions when I wasn't thinking properly clearly. She's amazing. _

1/6

It was a quiet night in Two Hundred and Twenty-One B Baker Street. The flat which had previously been a rambunctious center for

gunshots, drug busts and the occasional weeping woman (clients or acquaintances) had been completely subdued over the past few days. Sherlock Holmes should have been raving about how little he had on his plate with no current case available to him. However, his luck was soon to change not that he had realized it yet.

His home had been revamped for the weekly visits with his godchild. A girl with muddy blonde hair and bright green eyes that rivaled the forests he had previously been running through about a year and half ago. Her name was Eliza, not his first choice for a name but neither John nor Mary would budge on it. They thought it made her seem different. That hadn't been wrong. The little girl enjoyed whenever she got a chance to spend with the detective. She rarely cried in his presence, and if she did he just started humming a composition. She would stop shortly after and gaze up at him with eyes of wonder. Something that Sherlock didn't think he had ever notice happen with any of the other babies that he had encountered. Though he hadn't been trying to frequent family parks or the maternity ward of the hospital until Eliza had come into this world.

He enjoyed spending time with her, especially at her age. She needed constant care which gave him a slight distraction from the lack of work. John had taken videos of Sherlock's antics around his daughter. Sherlock would exaggerate his tales of recounting an adventure if he noticed the camera pointed at him. Smiling at the outburst of John berating him about it. It wasn't anything compared to his embellishments of what Sherlock was like.

Tonight, both John and Eliza were over again. Mary had gone out with Sally Donovan for a little girl's night out leaving John on his own. Instead of staying home he had ventured over to Baker Street to bug Sherlock.

They were currently in John's old room which had been converted in part to a minimal nursery. There was even a changing station. John's bed was still in there pushed against the wall. Sherlock was currently moving about the room dancing with Eliza as he hummed a tune. John chuckled when Sherlock made an attempt to dip Eliza only for her to make a fuss. "Alright. I'm sorry milady." He came to a full stop before turning to John. "She'll appreciate it more when she's older."

"I'm sure. Though she won't remember it much."

"That's what you're here for." He gestured to the camera which was blinking red as it was still on.

John sighed. "I'm not only here to document your revelations."

Sherlock just stared at him. That is usually what he did. "We are friends, too I suppose." He trailed off. John looked annoyed. "I'm joking." He smiled at the blond who didn't seem to find it funny at all.

"And you say Molly Hooper can't tell jokesâ€|" John shook his head.

At the mention of the auburn haired pathologist Sherlock turned away. John grew weary as he watched Sherlock step over to the crib and

fiddle with the mobile that was above it. Eliza cooed at the little musical sounds that came when he flicked it. "Have you gone to the hospital since the last time you were there? It was four months ago."

He was met with silence. That was a no then.

They had worked cases since then; where was he getting the information if not from Molly? He supposed Mycroft could have helped with that but he always went to Bart's. It was his home away from Baker Street. When he told Mary about this she was sure to want to do something. She liked Molly. She had spunk when it came to Sherlock. The slap in the lab was fresh in his mind.

Mrs. Hudson called from down the stairs. "Boys! You have a client."

This quickly changed his demeanor as he was rushing out of the room with Eliza. "At this hour?" he called back, switching the Watson child to his opposite side. "Who would be awake besides me and the occasional drunk?"

It was nearing two o'clock in the morning.

"Just come see, Sherlock. I'm going back to bed." He heard the door shut before he made it to the front of his flat. He let out a sigh before turning around and walking towards the sitting room where the clients usually waited for him. John was on his tail when he suddenly stopped rather abruptly.

_Molly. _She was here. Sitting. On the sofa, and twisting her fingers in a nervous fidget as if this was her first time coming here. It was the first time she had been here in a long time and he was completely aware of that. It was why he stopped, among other reasons that he didn't want to get into right at this moment.

Sherlock shifted the baby in his arms before hearing his best friend come up behind him. "Would you mind?" Taking his eyes off the woman for a moment to pass his goddaughter back to her father.

John chuckled, ignoring Sherlock's usual weirdness as he took over holding his child. "I am her father, after all." He decided to leave the two alone and headed back downstairs to see Mrs. Hudson. He'd come back tomorrow after the two of them had spoken to see what had happened. He needed to get back before Mary wandered in wondering where her husband and daughter had gone.

Molly's head was bowed so she didn't see the smile that John shot her way. He stared at Sherlock's head before heading out.

Sherlock called out her name, aloud this time as he began his short walk over to the sofa where Molly - the client - was sitting. Normally the clients sat in a chair but Molly wasn't normal in any regard.

"Mollyâ€¦|what's the matter?" When she lifted her head he took immediate notice of the tear tracks on her face. She had managed a short smile as she started to get up to talk to him. He waved it away. "No. Sit. You know how this works."

His eyes zoned in on her hands and state of dress. She had been somewhere that required her to dress up, at least in the most casual dress she owned. A lilac sundress which looked lovely on her, he admitted. It wouldn't be Molly if she didn't have to clash to the best dressed fashionista out there. She had chosen a blue jumper with white kittens all over it. Not his favorite. No matter; he was drawn to focusing on the red stains of her hands, and the splash on her clothes.

"Right. I figured you'd be the best person to askâ€¦" She seemed hesitant, something that Sherlock himself could understand. They hadn't exactly been talking lately. He couldn't turn her away though. She was the one asking for his help. A new twist in their ever changing dynamic.

He couldn't help finding it ironic and not nearly as refreshing as it should have been. To be completely honest it's the first time he's helped her with something that wasn't directly involving dead psychopaths. A flash of the last time she was here for guidance hit him strong. He had to shelf it, as he bent down and inspected her hands. "Tell me." He drew in a deep breath, as he realized he'd probably be more resourceful if he tried to remove some of the blood while they were talking.

He rose up as she opened her mouth to begin her tale, her eyes trained on him unsure of if she should wait. As he ducked into the kitchen he called to her to go on. "I'll be just a moment. Keep talking."

Molly wrung her hands as she waited a beat before raising her voice, her throat felt strained as she began telling him her reason for being in this state and what she felt he could do for her.

_She had gotten an email from one of her oldest friends from Cardiff. She hadn't been home in a long time. Nor had she spoken to many people from her time living there. A few comments on blog posts or Facebook statuses but other than that there wasn't anyone that she regularly kept up with that wasn't Meena and she saw her nearly every week for lunch. There was one friend who had sent Molly emails regularly however. She got to read them when she wasn't too busy and sent a quick reply if she found anything to say. Her name was Tilly Morrison and she was coming into town for a few days and wanted to have dinner. _

_Molly hadn't seen much of the outside of her morgue or lab or even her home these days with so much going on that she was happy to take the night to spend some time with an old friend. It would be nice to catch up, and it was. _

_Tilly had a daughter who was only six years old who she brought along. Tilly had an awful fear of flying or really driving places on her own. So it was up to her daughter to help her out. Her husband had passed away. Molly felt bad for not having reached out during that time but Tilly hadn't told her about any of the arrangements. There has been a few weeks when she hadn't heard from her but that was all. There was a brief mention of him being gone. Molly had sent flowers and a handwritten note to express her sorrow of knowing that Tilly was on her own now. _

_"_You can talk to me about anything. I promise I've held secrets

before." It was true for a lot of Molly's life. Including her father's and one of her mother's. Not to mention the detective who had asked her help on more occasions than she could count (somewhere around four big cases, and a few off the record that she wasn't supposed to talk about). _

_It was shortly after that Tilly had had a cry as her daughter (Millie) had looked on sadly at the topic of her father. She had only met him once when she had gone back home. Tilly had stayed in Cardiff up until this point. It was one of the reasons why Molly felt obligated if not already wanting to meet up with her while she was here. She knew what it was like to go to a new place and notice how different it was from what you already knew. It was a shock to anyone. _

She imagined it was worse when you had to figure this all out with only yourself and your kid tagging along. Tilly soon composed herself so that she could grill Molly on what she had been up to. "I work in the morgue. It's not exactly lively."

At that both Tilly and Millie giggled. "Oh Molls you still have that humor. I've missed that."

Molly was glad someone appreciated it. She hadn't pulled one of those out in a long time. "Thank you." She smiled turning to Millie who had the most adorable freckles that were set in a triangle pattern on her right cheek. "Everyone used to think I was weird but your mum thought I was sweet for thinking of such things like the dead."

_"_You used to wear your hair in these two plaits. It helped your case." Tilly mumbled as she patted Molly's hand. "Soâ€|are you seeing anyone Molly?"_

Molly shook her head as she tucked her hair behind her ear. She had been thinking of cutting it a bit. "Not for a while. I was engaged last year for a time. Just didn't work out."

_Tilly had always been able to catch onto things. Then again most people already knew about her situation with Sherlock Holmes. She didn't think she had mentioned many times, perhaps once but that was about it. _

_Her friend didn't ask her about Sherlock though. Instead she just smiled at her. "You'll find someone. You of all people deserve to be happy." Molly swallowed down the sadness that washed over her. It didn't last too long. Soon enough they were ordering desserts and drinking the last of the wine â€" Millie had some juice â€" their time together for the night was coming to a close. _

_"_Maybe I can show you a bit of the sights they don't tell you about. A friend showed me some newer ones." Molly commented as they were putting on their coats to leave. Tilly made sure that Millie's hat wasn't crooked on her head before taking her hand so that they could step out. _

_The cool air hit them as the door was pushed open by the small hands of Millie. Molly was looking around for something that she thought she had just had in her hand. "What's up, Molly?" Tilly asked as they were stepping over the threshold of the exit. _

Molly laughed at herself. "I think I left my purse at the table. I'll meet you outside." Tilly smiled at Molly. She hadn't changed that much. She sometimes spaced out about the smallest of things. "You sure, we can wait inside."

_ "Yeah." Molly gestured for her to go. "It'll only take me a few seconds. I know it's cold out there." Tilly nodded as she gripped her daughter's hand and rushed to head outside. They would be back inside their warm hotel room soon enough. _

Sherlock had never seen Molly visibly this distraught in a long time. Her hands were trembling in his as he wiped the blood away. The light pink of the small basin he had brought in to help get rid of some of the evidence. He wondered if she had noticed anyone looking at her out in the streets on her way here. It didn't appear she called for a cab. Perhaps she had been close. Or she had just taken a longer route to get here. He'd have to inquire about it.

Molly stopped talking for a second, using the hand that he hadn't touched to wipe her face on the sleeve of her jumper. When she resumed she sounded worn out, "I just found them there. Just a little off to the side. No one did anything but stared - of the few that were still out - and I hoped they weren'tâ€|but they were. They were dead." She paused, before looking right at him. She had been avoiding his eyes ever since she started telling him what had happened. "There was so much blood. I could see the pain on their faces. There was so much blood," she repeated before looking down at her hands and the basin of water that was no longer clear.

Sherlock had to distract her. She was very close to coming completely undone. She hadn't gotten there yet but he knew she was on the brink of it. He smoothed his thumb over the back of hand. "What killed them? What kind of wounds were they?"

He watched her close her eyes for a moment. It wasn't because she needed to gather herself, she was thinking back. Recreating the crime scene. She had helped him with that before on two short occasions. It helped to visualize. His fingers didn't steady wanting to be sure she didn't immerse herself in that moment. It wasn't going to help her or him, the man she came to in her hour of desperation. She was shaken by it. She responded shortly, "Two different ones. Gunshot and a blade. There wasn't enough light to tell but the people who did it were gone."

"You think it's more than one person." It wasn't a question, just an assessment to make sure he had heard her right.

"It's not an impossibility." She leaned her head back and looked at the ceiling. Sherlock took the time to switch to the other hand. He had cleaned most of it. There was still some caked under her nails. That would be her choice to clean it. He knew that she would, it was what she was used to.

He hummed as he resumed what he was doing. "Anyone else who knew she was going to be in the city? You mentioned a dead husband. What was he like?"

"On the few occasions - mostly in passing - that I met him he seemed alright. Normal bloke. Didn't have any warning signs appearing over

his head." She let out a small laugh. "I didn't really go home much. Tilly talked about him tonight though. She was grateful for having him in her life for as long as she did. But, I don't think there was anyone else. She just wanted to come to London at least once with her daughter. That's all she wanted." Molly sniffled.

Sherlock stopped moving for a second as he looked up at Molly. She was back to avoiding his gaze again; a gesture that he understood more than he wanted to admit right now. Even still, he wanted her to understand him for one moment.

"Molly." He muttered quietly. "Molly, would you look at me for a moment."

She did so very slowly. There was so many emotions swimming through those muddy brown eyes of hers. She slowly sat straighter, waiting for him. She was always waiting for him.

His eyes were laser focused on her and this moment because he knew it would change the tone for everything that followed "in this investigation, and in the place he wanted to get to" it truly mattered. "I'm not going to let you down. I'm going to find out who killed Tilly and Millie. I'm going to find out who hurt you this way. It's my one promise to you that I won't fail at because I owe you that much. For all the bullshit I've put you through." His hands pressed into hers when she began to shake her head at him. "You deserve this one thing on top of many things. I promise you this, Molly."

"And if you fail?" Molly was one of the few who could ask him that he not immediately blow up at them. Failure was not an option here. He didn't want to see this image of her again. Utterly broken and hopeless.

He removed his hands, and picked up the bowl from off the floor. He rose to his full height. He was towering over her he realized so he bent down just a smidge, and put a hand on her head. He didn't muss it up, he just leveled his hand there. "I won't."

2. Chapter 2

THE ILLUSTRIOUS CLIENT

2/6

Molly had known that she could trust Sherlock. This is what he did for a living. She hadn't even realized she was coming here until the sirens faded out from her ears. Then she had spent more than half of the last couple minutes walking up to the door in a panic. She had been covered in blood, and was absolutely hysterical. Soothing tones from Mrs. Hudson had coaxed her into heading up to the sitting room of Sherlock's flat before he ultimately peeked out to view his client. She was his client. An idea that must have shocked him for the half a minute it took before he approached her. Or, he had been thinking what she had.

She didn't know what she was doing here. She had known he was someone that could help her "truly help her" - beyond that she hadn't even been sure how to go about talking about it.

Now he was standing there with an almost smile on his face as he took a step back. She watched as he drew in a breath before nodding not at her or anyone in particular. Just doing so, as if he had decided something himself. "Okay. You need to get some rest."

Molly implored him with a look. Did he want her to leave?

His next statement sounded stranger to her. "I can give you some clothes."

"Huh?" She moved to stand up. "Sher-." He was out of the room in an instant and heading to his room she presumed. She stayed by the couch not believing what he was doing or why. If she wasn't so shaky she would have hollered to him and asked but she waited for him.

He didn't keep her waiting too long. A stack of clothes were in his hands when he came back. He beckoned her towards the hallway that led to the back where his room was, directly through the kitchen. The bathroom was also there. She had frequented it only a handful of times when she was over for more than ten minutes.

She followed him at a leisure pace. He lightly pushed her inside. "Take the bed after your shower."

"Sherlock." She called to him before he could disappear again. He was even good at it in his own home. "What are you doing?" She asked. Confusion etched on his face. He needed a better explanation. "Why are you asking â€" no - telling me to stay?"

"You're a mess, Molly. Bloodied and shaken. You can't go home yet. You need rest now. Isn't this what people do for each other?" Yes, she wanted to say. People do. Friends â€" the word he hadn't used when talking about her, ever â€" do. She understood what he was trying to do. It didn't mean it didn't confuse her. There was something else that he wasn't sharing. He was right though it wasn't time for them to talk about other things. Tomorrow then.

She nodded silently before closing the door.

The door to Sherlock Holmes' bedroom was slightly ajar when she stepped out of the bathroom. The steam from the greatly appreciated shower sifted out as she stepped over the threshold and peeked around the corner. She couldn't hear anything coming from the front room. So she clutched her clothes which she had wadded up, she would have to throw them out, and moved the five feet over to the door. She hadn't ever been in here before. There had been several hours when she thought of what it would be like but she had never thought she'd ever have a reason to be in here. Not logically anyhow. Yet, she was right in front of the door. Her head peeking inside and spotting Sherlock messing with something on the desk that was tucked next to the wardrobe.

The room looked small. The bed was the largest object in the entire room. Molly had to hide a smile when she noticed the periodic table. He was a scientist at his essence wasn't he?

He must have heard her, because he turned almost immediately. "I won't be offended if you roll up the legs of the pants. You're smaller than I am." Molly looked down at her feet where the bottom of

the pants were pooled there. She had rolled the waist two times already. She wouldn't trip too much. She smiled at him cautiously. She lifted her shoulders in a shrug. "What are you working on?"

He shook his head as he moved towards her in a slow gait that was very reminiscent of the not-date-day when he rose from the ashes. "Ah, it's not important right now." He reached out and then caught himself before pointing to the bed.

It was here that she noticed he had already pulled back the sheets for her. It was such a strange sight that she started laughing. Sherlock inclined his head. "Sorry. I'm tired." She gestured to the bed as she made a small movement to set down on the side not completely wanting to lay down on it just yet. "It's a lot to process."

Sherlock understood. There was something else plaguing her. He felt that he could grasp at that as well. He had never allowed her into his room. Not many had actually been let into his room without him slapping the door in their faces. He had left the door open for her "an invitation" and now he was inviting her to sleep. It had never really crossed his mind that she should go into the nursery. If anything that would send the opposite message of what he was trying to do.

He took a chance and sat next to her. Not too close, but enough that she would know that he was here if she wanted to say anything else before he went. "You've had a long night, Molly."

"Sorry I interrupted your time with Eliza." She said immediately. Sherlock's head jerked towards her. Molly's head was bent and she was picking at her nails. They were cut low enough that she could work cleanly without tearing the gloves that she used for work. There was a pale coat of varnish on them. Understated as ever, she was.

"You weren't. John was preparing to head home anyhow." He paused and drew in a breath. "You don't ever have to apologize for needing help. My help especially. We can talk about it more later. You're not bothering me though, Molly." He needed her to understand that.

He mimicked the same motion he had done before her shower, reaching out to pat her head with his hand just barely touching her wet hair. It looked shorter. He blinked realizing it had escaped his attention the first time around. A short cut that framed her face in the same auburn waves as usual. It ended a few millimeters under her chin. It suited her instead of unsettling him. He hated change but when it came to Molly change wasn't all bad. He almost welcomed it.

He stood up. He didn't say anything more just turned off the light. He had left the lamp on for her in case she needed it.

Once he shut the door behind him he drew in a deep breath. He headed towards his study that was a few doors down. It was time get to work.

-x-

Molly woke up slowly with a headache that she normally acquainted with having a bit too much to drink. She recalled drinking but she didn't think that was why her head hurt. She had cried buckets of

tears.

Millie and Tilly—they were dead.

She ran her hands through her hair and let out a sigh. She opened her eyes for a brief moment before closing them again. She really didn't want to move. Her heart ached. Her head hurt. Not to mention the fact that she was slowly realizing where she was.

She peeked an eye open once again and looked around. The lamp which had been left on for her benefit had been turned off. The clutter of the desk had been fixed to a point. That led her to believe that Sherlock had come in at some point. To further prove that point she had no idea how late in the day it was. It was late when she had come in to sleep. Or to put it more bluntly - Sherlock had told her to take the bed as if that was a normal occurrence and she had just complied without arguing. She had been tired.

As her eyes took in the room with clearer eyes she noticed that he was standing directly left of his wardrobe with his eyes closed. She tilted her head in curiosity. He was either sleeping or in his mind palace. She looked closer at the image. He had his hands folded in front of his chest, and didn't look distressed in the slightest. That didn't mean much. He sometimes went deeper into his mind and could pull that look off.

Molly carefully sat up and waited to see if he would budge. He didn't keep her waiting long. It took a solid few ticks of the clock before he unfolded his arms and stuck his hands in his trouser pants' pockets and looked at her. "You're awake. Good. I called Bart's. They thought I had you occupied somewhere but when I explained that they might have new visitors in the morgue that you were loosely connected with they put two and two together. Regardless, you have a few days for mending. Their wording." He pursed his lip as he stared at Molly.

Her hair was messy but she looked better than she was eleven hours ago. His gaze traveled to the clock that was on her left. He might have let her sleep a bit too much. They were going to be busy today, she would need her rest. He had gotten a few hours once he had unraveled a few things for the case. They'd talk about it over breakfast or according to the time a late brunch.

"Thank you." She told him slowly as her eyes shifted slightly to the black garment bag that was hanging on one of the knobs of the wardrobe. Her mouth twisted in nervousness of what could be in that bag. Sherlock was known for having an eclectic taste in much of his life. Certainly clothes were among that.

"Mrs. H brought up some food. We'll eat first then worry about that." He gestured to the bag. He had a small smile on his face.

She looked at it once more before nodding and climbing out of the bed. She passed Sherlock and headed towards the kitchen. She could hear him directly behind her. They didn't talk as Molly piled up her plate with the finger foods that Martha had brought in for her. Sherlock waited until she was done and they were sitting across from each other back in the sitting room. This time he sat in his chair, legs crossed while he sipped on his tea and ate half a sandwich.

Molly noticed he was eating right away. "You're workingâ€|" She commented.

"It's a bit awkward watching you eat. This is already uncomfortable for the both of us. Let's not make it worse." He mumbled.

Molly could admit he was correct about that. Even still she felt that things didn't feel as off as they were. Perhaps because she hadn't fully woken up and thought too much on it. "You can ask your questions while I'm distracted." She told him shortly afterwards. She knew he had several that he needed to ask her in order for them to get a move on. However, she didn't expect him to lead with "Is she really called Tilly?"

It caused Molly to start laughing. Her mother had the same reaction when she introduced her one day when Molly had invited Tilly over to study for an extensive exam. "Sorry." She waved it off before taking a sip of her tea and sobering up so she could answer him. "No. It's just what I call her. Same with her daughter. It's just an affectionate thing that sometimes make it easier for people who aren't happy with their names. She's actually Matilda Mae Morrison. Her family's name is Haggard."

"And her daughter?"

"Camilla Rose Morrison. She liked the idea of flower names so she used it for her middle name." Sherlock could appreciate that. He hummed.

"You said there wasn't anyone who knew her here except from you. Husband is deceased, what about her parents?"

"Never met her dad â€" deadbeat supposedly â€" mum died during uni so she doesn't have anyone really. She visited her uncle sometimes but mostly because she was being nice. She didn't exactly like him. I went with her a few times."

"What was he like?" Molly could tell he wasn't going to scratch off an uncle just because she said he wasn't important. Everyone was important when it came to murder and solving this one was no different. Molly quickly explained that Uncle Richard was a hoarder that only left his house for sales at antique shops and the odd auction. He smelled bad like he didn't shower as much as he should. He just didn't seem capable of doing something like that just because Tilly stopped coming around once she was married. "You're still going to look into him?" She asked him once she was done. She had just turned over her teacup. She was finished with everything.

"Don't have to. I already have. I needed an outside perspective." Molly would say he was improving on that spectrum. He didn't ask her to make himself feel good. He just wanted her opinion. He valued it, she supposed.

"Was that helpful?" She asked him as she stared at him directly waiting for a sign that maybe she needed to dig a little deeper.

"Quite." He got to his feet and walked behind the sofa to retrieve something; a file and he passed it to her. Inside it were photographs

of an old man sitting outside a shabby looking home. The man and place were familiar to Molly. "When was this taken?"

"A few days ago. I'd say he hasn't made a move to attempt to leave that stoop." Sherlock smiled shortly.

Behind a few details about Richard there was something laminated. A dossier on Tilly's husband. It was short and to the point. He had no enemies to speak of, and the only selling point was that he fathered Millie and had a wife. He was a rather ordinary person in Sherlock's mind at the least. Molly could tell by the almost bored expression he had on his face when she peered over the file.

She kept going and then closed almost immediately. Photos of the crime scene. She pressed a hand to her head as the memories rushed her. She suddenly realized that this must be what it felt like when someone had to view a body at her morgue of someone they cared about. Or a victim had to go back to the scene.

She tasted the wine on her lips except there was a problem. It tasted like copper and she could feel the food churning in her stomach. She moved as quickly as she could through the kitchen to the bathroom. She felt long fingers combing her hair out of her face rather than seeing them as she heaved. "I should have looked at those first." She told him as she pressed her face into the toilet a second time to get the rest out.

"What was it from? You're used to blood and bodies." He passed her a towel so she could clean up her mouth. She took it as she leaned against the wall, wiped her mouth before looking up at him.

"I remembered the wine but for some reason it tasted like blood. I don't knowâ€¦" She said in explanation as she took a deep breath.

"I'll see if Lestrade has the bottle. I need to check something."

"You're thinking its poison but we know they were slayed, Sherlock." She called to him as he made to retreat to grab his mobile.

He was nearly out of the room when stopped, both hands catching on the two sides of the arch that led out the bathroom. "We haven't got the toxics back. You might be remembering something that you didn't realize because of the shock."

"Or it could be a misdirection." She got to her feet and turned the faucet on. "What you won't say is going to lead us in the wrong direction Sherlock. I was probably the target."

Molly heard him sigh as she took the mouth wash out of the medicine cabinet and swished the gross stench from her mouth. He was turned towards her when she got done.

"I was going to get to it in the cab ride overâ€¦" He trailed over. It was clear he had a lot of things that they hadn't yet talked about when it came to this case.

"What did you find out?" It was obvious to her if they were heading anywhere it was because he had another lead.

"Get dressed and we'll sort it all out, yeah?" Molly stared at Sherlock carefully. He was starting to draw back a little. She wasn't sure if it was her coming out and saying what he didn't want to admit or what it was. He looked distressed but at the same time he has this calm to him that she was familiar with. "Okay." She whispered as she passed by him to grab the garment bag that was still hanging in his room.

Sherlock waited in the hall for her. She came back mentioned she was gonna take quick shower. Sherlock decided to head back to the sitting room and update Lestrade. Even with Molly's play through of the previous night's events he still needed to be sure that everything was okay. He couldn't freely admit but it terrified him at the thought that someone had first tried to poison Molly and her friends then took one more stab at it by killing the same people she had been there with to send a message to her "to him" to anyone who would be able to stop them in their tracks.

This was his city and he would send a message of his own soon enough. There were certain individuals you didn't cross and Sherlock Holmes was one of them.

After taking her shower and drying her hair the best she could with the towel she unzipped the black garment bag and was surprised first by the color of the dress. It was yellow a color that she didn't wear too often unless you counted a wedding she had gone to. This dress was simpler while somehow still having some properness to it. Sherlock didn't really do things halfway did he?

The dress had a white peter pan collar that flowed down into a clean yellow and white polka dotted dress. It fit her, she wasn't surprised about that. However, it did make her wonder when he had gotten the dress. From his own wardrobe he must have contacts that could do him favors like this. No doubt he had collected a number of favors.

Molly brushed through her hair as best she could before heading back out to see him. He was scribbling something down in his notebook with the phone tucked in between his ear and neck. He spotted her and motioned for her to go back to the bedroom for 'shoes' which he had mouthed for her, while continuing to listen to what information whomever was feeding him on the other end.

She found the shoes at the end of the bed already out of the box so that she could just slip them on and go. They were a simple pair of black heels. She headed back out to see him only to be met halfway.

"Yellow?" She asked him, with a small smile.

"It's one of your better suited colors." He cleared his throat. "I was rightâ€|obviously."

Molly hummed. There was nothing much else they needed to say about that or at least as far as Sherlock was concerned. He instinctively reached for her hand but at the last minute clasped his hand at her wrist so they could be on their way. He managed to pick up his coat and pass Molly's hers before calling to Mrs. Hudson that they were heading out and wouldn't be back until later.

Once they stepped outside Sherlock hailed for a taxi. One was there in a few short moments and Molly didn't think she'd ever be used to that (not that she was used to it). He gestured her to slide in before he joined her and rattled off an address. It wasn't in London.

"Okay, now tell me." She turned her head towards him and waited. Sherlock looked past her outside the window as they began traveling.

"I often look for similar cases when it comes to targeted hits." He begun only to notice Molly looking at him weirdly. "You know that though, you do something similar. Regardless I found a case that fits nearly exactly and I made contact with the woman and she agreed to talk to us."

"How can you be sure that it's the same?"

"I went to have a look."

He waited for Molly to react to that tidbit of information. She swallowed, "You went to the morgue."

"The files were there. I didn't touch anything or anyone. I just compared the file with the assistant pathologist standing very close. He also hasn't started the autopsy I asked him to wait."

Molly's eyes were glassed over a bit. "Thought you'd want a hand in that. I wouldn't recommend it but I can't stop you from trying if you feel it's important." He paused briefly and reached over and squeezed her hand gently before withdrawing.

"I might." Was what he got in reply to that. She hadn't thought about the autopsies yet. "Thank you."

Sherlock filled her in on what he knew about the previous case. The woman had lost her sister to a similar hit, and nearly lost her shoulder " and arm - when a final attempt was made on her life. The people responsible were never apprehended. Sherlock inferred that perhaps they had run off or had a new project that they needed to get on to. The fact that they were doing it again said a lot about their priorities. He would go so far as to admit that the man who had hired the people behind this " it was definitely a hired hit " was on a mission and it could be a different matter entirely. Nothing was exactly certain however.

Molly simmered on this information while they drove on to the house that turned out to be in a particularly vacant part of the outskirts of the city. There were maybe three cars on the street when they taxi driver halted. He asked if they wanted him to wait but Sherlock told him that he could come back in about two hours.

The house itself was medium sized. The outside had a few plants hanging about, a bicycle was laying in the yard. No car.

Molly gave Sherlock a short nod before they headed up the pathway towards the door. Molly was the one to knock on the door. Molly stood a few feet to the side as they waited for the door to be opened. When it did both Sherlock and Molly were surprised by the exclamation that

they were greeted with.

"Molly Hooper, is that you?"

* * *

><p>Well. I don't really have much to say about this except it's taken me a bit to work through it. I had some time where I wasn't sure where I was going to go with parts of it. I'll admit that last part just kind of happened on it's own. I didn't plan that. Which is good I suppose. I like writing to happen in the moment. So I hope you guys liked this.

**If you'd like to have a look at the yellow dress Molly's wearing in this one I posted a link on my profile for easy access.

>

**I did actually model Molly's haircut after Loo's haircut that she's recently gotten (if you check her Twitter she posted a photo). I think it would look really lovely on Molly. **

Before I go I just want to thank everyone who took a chance on this fic, and have been really overwhelmingly amazing with the follows and comments about it. I'll admit I'm still really nervous about this. But, that's a good thing when it's something you really care about. I really care about these two. Please let me know what you thought about this one and hopefully I'll be able to get a third chapter as soon as I can. Thanks for everything, you guys.

much love,

day

End
file.